To Explore the Land of Canaan

Archaeology of the Biblical Worlds

Edited by
Aren M. Maeir and Haim Goldfus

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To Explore the Land of Canaan

Studies in Biblical Archaeology
in Honor of Jeffrey R. Chadwick

Edited by
Aren M. Maeir and George A. Pierce

DE GRUYTER

Preface

It is with utmost pleasure that we offer this gift of friendship, gratitude and admiration to our great friend, colleague, teacher and *mensch*, Jeffrey R. Chadwick, on the occasion of his 66th birthday. When the idea came up of putting together this volume in honor of Jeff (as he is known by everyone), from the very beginning, all potential contributors that we approached reacted with excited willingness to take part in this labor of love and joy. This in itself reflects how everyone who knows Jeff relates to him.

Jeff combines several outstanding qualities, which are apparent to all his acquaintances. Whether in the classroom or the field, he is a consummate teacher whose clear, catchy and well-organized lessons are lapped up by students. He is an exceptional leader, well exemplified as Jeff directs an excavation area. The excavation is conducted at an exceedingly high standard, the participants enjoy every moment of it, and all come out enriched by the experience, and many young students became seasoned archaeologists under his wings. As a friend, rarely can one find a more loyal, consistent and go to person – he is simply the best! Jeff is a master of social interactions, knowing what to say and how to say it in just about any situation. If there were ever a dig participant who had difficulty getting along with others, Jeff's area was the place to go, and all social problems would dissolve. Finally, Jeff's sense of humor, which at times requires people to get used to, is something that all who have spent time with Jeff, whether at work or at play, appreciate so much!

The title of this volume includes the biblical passage *"to Explore the Land of Canaan"* (Deut 13:2), which so nicely encapsulates Jeff's relationship with the Holy Land. Combining a deep love, a thirstless interest and deep knowledge, as well as a gifted teacher about all aspects relating to the land.

All this and more was why all the participants were so eager to contribute to the volume in Jeff's honor. Many of the contributors participated in the excavations at Tell eṣ-Ṣâfî/Gath, in which Jeff has been a central figure (directing excavations in Areas F and D East) for more than 20 years. Others are colleagues and friends from various stages of his career at excavations such as Tel Miqne-Ekron, at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, or at the Brigham Young University Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies, on Mt. Scopus in Jerusalem.

We would like to thank all contributors for their papers, Rebecca Prete and Aaron Ostler of the Faculty Editing Service at Brigham Young University for copy-editing the papers, Haim Goldfus, co-editor (with Aren Maeir) of the "Archaeology of the Biblical Worlds" series, for agreeing to include this book in the series, and to those at de Gruyter publishers, particularly Aaron Sandborn-Overby, for publishing this volume.

In closing, all of us, editors and contributors, can but wish our dear friend Jeff, many more years of friendship, camaraderie, archaeology, laughter and enrichment!

Ad meah ve-esrim!

Aren M. Maeir and George A. Pierce

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A Retrospective on the Career and Impact of Jeffrey R. Chadwick, Archaeologist and Educator

I am not an archaeologist. I'm not sure I would be able to spell "archaeology" without the help of spellcheck. I've seen some of the Indiana Jones movies and even bought a fedora to look like Harrison Ford. I proudly wore that hat when I visited Israel and other countries in the Middle East. I thought it would give me greater credibility when I talked to people about ancient historical sites and biblical archaeology. But even my impressive Indiana Jones fedora couldn't hide the fact that I am not an archaeologist, and I don't even "play" one very well. Although I had read (or more accurately perused) books and articles about the history, culture, and recent archaeological finding of lands of the Bible, I had never met or talked to a real-life archaeologist. However, that all changed in June 1993. And thus began my journey to a greater appreciation for the vital work of archaeologists and my "love affair" with biblical archaeology, albeit as a rank amateur.

My family and I had just arrived in Jerusalem. We were jet-lagged, excited, apprehensive, and anxious to explore the city but somewhat fearful to do so. We didn't speak Hebrew or Arabic. We didn't know our way around. We didn't have a map. We didn't even know where we lived other than it was a dark, dank, and dingy apartment on French Hill in East Jerusalem. There was no food in the kitchen cupboards or refrigerator, and we had three hungry children. We didn't know what to do, where to go, or how to begin. We all felt like crying (mostly from the jet lag – we hadn't slept for well over twenty-four hours because we were so nervous). Then came a knock on the door.

"Hi. I'm Jeff Chadwick. I teach Ancient Near East at the BYU Jerusalem Center. I'm glad we're going to be colleagues. I thought you might need some help." His smiling face encouraged us immediately. He looked young – not much older than the students I would soon be teaching in my Hebrew Bible and New Testament classes. I had heard of Jeff, but I had never actually met him before, until now. I had now finally met my first real archaeologist. Jeff had recently received his PhD in Archaeology and Middle-Eastern Studies from the University of Utah. Although he was a newly minted PhD, he had also studied at and done archaeological fieldwork with Tel Aviv University and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. I was not familiar with him as an archaeologist, but I was familiar with his teaching in the Educational System of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and his yearly summer teaching stints for BYU in Israel.

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Jeff wasn't visiting me to talk about his archaeological expertise or orient me to my new responsibilities with the BYU Jerusalem Center (commonly known in Jerusalem as "Mormon University"). In fact, he wasn't visiting me at all. He thought that my family might need a little help in getting to know the city. He was especially sensitive to my wife's trepidation about finding grocery stores and the kids' school, as well as driving in Jerusalem without getting killed. "Sensitive" is not a term that is often used for Dr. Chadwick in his academic and professional circles. But that day in June 1993 in Jerusalem, we saw a more personal side of Jeff, and it endeared him to us and impressed us more than his growing academic credentials. From that day, Jeff and I became fast friends.

Although I was fairly experienced in teaching the Bible to Latter-day Saint adults and college-age young people, I became acutely aware of my serious lack of knowledge of important background information, such as biblical archaeology, history of the ancient Near East, and an anthropological examination of these ancient peoples. I could competently teach the textual narrative of the Bible and the religious teachings and application drawn from it. But the more I learned from Jeff – sitting in on his Ancient Near East lectures, being taught by him as we visited archaeological sites in preparation for taking students there on fieldtrips, and just peppering him with a myriad of questions – the more I wanted to learn and study and experience. I was beginning to experience what one of Jeff's former students in Jerusalem said of him: "Professor Chadwick taught us how the land makes the Bible come alive, and the Bible makes the land come alive." I started to see the Bible and the Holy Land through archaeologist eyes (albeit just a novice, wannabe archaeologist). Instead of just seeing stones strewn about on barren ground, I started to visualize walls and gates, towers and towns. I could almost see an ancient city bustling with people busily engaged in selling and buying. I could almost hear the sounds of the streets and smell the aromas of the market. As I learned about tells and stratification, I found myself looking at every mound and wondering what may lie beneath the surface. I was becoming a biblical archaeologist – or so I fantasized.

Just like the students in Jeff's course on the ancient Near East, I studied his book, *The Holy Land: A Geographical, Historical, and Archaeological Guide to the Land of the Bible* (coauthored with D. Kelly Ogden). The book included map exercises and study guides for the readings, just like other academic courses, as well as terms and timelines to be memorized. Fortunately, I didn't have to take the exams. I was just trying to absorb as much as I could and stay at least one day ahead of my own students and not make a fool of myself when I tried to explain the archaeology of a biblical site we would visit. Pretty soon, I was able to place the people and events of the Bible within the archaeological time periods: Middle Bronze Age, Late Bronze Age, Iron Age. The terms were no longer like a foreign language to me. I even learned what transpired between the First and Second Temple periods.

Like the students, I was excited to see every mound and exclaim, "There is a tell." But after visiting so many mounds that they were no longer exciting to us, the

students would chant, "O hell, not another tell." Yet, there was Professor Chadwick in his "Live to Tell" T-shirt, smiling broadly from ear to ear, ever ready to share more of his encyclopedic knowledge of archaeological sites in Israel. He couldn't get enough. Truly, he "lives to tell."

The students learned and loved archaeology and understood its critical relationship to the scriptural text not by reading the textbook, doing the map exercises and study guides, memorizing terms, or studying class notes taken during Professor Chadwick's class lectures (as interesting as they were). Jeff always had something new to help the students learn. He had songs. Jeff would use songs as learning tools and memory devices to help students remember places and events of the Bible. None of his former students at the Jerusalem Center will ever forget the Shephelah song (to the tune of the 1960s hit "My Boyfriend's Back" by the Angels) or the one about Tel Megiddo (to the tune of "Kokomo" by the Beach Boys). These are among the "greatest hits" of Dr. Jeff Chadwick. When he was not teaching students with silly songs about the geography and tells of Israel, he was singing songs and playing guitar in his local Utah rock band. We both shared love for classic rock and peppered each other with rock music trivia. While studying the New Testament and visiting archaeological sites in the Galilee, Jeff arranged for the students to have a dance at En Gev on the shore of Kinneret. Chadwick and I became the best DJs En Gev ever saw. Jeff was an archaeologist and academic by day. Rock star at night. So, when his students call him a "rock star," they don't know how literal that is.

When a terrorist attack on foreign tourists derailed the much-anticipated trip of the BYU Jerusalem Center students and faculty to Egypt during Winter/Spring semester 1994, Jeff jumped into action and helped arrange for us to have the unique experience of working on an archaeological dig. For years, he had worked with Sy Gitin and Trude Dothan at Tel Miqne-Ekron. No doubt, these archaeologists were filled with both excitement and terror at the prospect of having 180 enthusiastic, but inexperienced, students and faculty shoveling and sifting, digging and dancing. Their excitement likely stemmed from the prospect of having so many helping hands (as slave labor), whereas the terror came from the potential damage that could be caused by not-so-helping hands of many young adults, whose brains (particularly the decision-making part) were not fully developed. In those two weeks at the dig, would the potential for hours and hours of preparation work on the grids and then digging under the careful eye of trained archaeologists outweigh the risks of the inevitable horsing around that occurs when trained archaeologists are not looking? I don't know how Jeff "sold" the idea to the directors and supervisors. I don't know whether they were excited or apprehensive or most likely both. However, the students were more than excited at the prospect of being personally involved in real-life, hands-on archaeology work, rather than just hearing about it from Professor Chadwick and their religion professors. This was to be a historic event for the BYU Jerusalem Center. As far as I know, it was the first time that all of the students would participate for that length of time on an archaeological dig. They had walked in the footsteps of kings and prophets of

ancient Israel and Judah. They had walked in the footsteps of Jesus of Nazareth. Now they were actually going to walk in the giant footsteps of Goliath of Gath (or at least try to find some Philistine artifacts).

For me personally, I was beyond excited. At last, I was going to be an archaeologist, like Indiana Jones, fedora and all. I was sure that I would help find priceless relics that would someday be housed in the world's great museums. Unfortunately, as I quickly learned, fantasy is not reality. I hadn't anticipated the hard work required to just get grids ready to dig. And then there was the suffocating heat; the dirt and dust; sweaty, stinky bodies; and the relentless tedium of the work. I wasn't prepared for any of that. (I don't remember that part in Indiana Jones, but I must admit I didn't see all the movies.) I never found a priceless relic, although our students did find some remarkable things. In fact, Sy and Trude and their staff were impressed by and very complimentary of the work of the students from "The Mormon University." Now, over a quarter of century since that experience, I am still convinced that Jeff purposely put me in a grid well outside the city walls, knowing full well I would dig and dig and dig and never find anything. At least it cured me of the fanciful desire to be an archaeologist myself and instilled in me an even greater respect and appreciation for Jeff and other archaeologists like him. Now I am content to just read and learn from their works in the comfort of my air-conditioned office.

As a testament to Jeff's impact on the learning and lives of those students who attended the BYU Jerusalem Center from 1993–1994, he was requested to lead a twenty-fifth anniversary tour to Israel for these alumni and their spouses in the summer of 2019. I was privileged to accompany them. Once again it was a remarkable experience, not just learning from Jeff on-site as we had done those many years ago but also observing how these students – now all older than we were when we were their professors – appreciated and honored Professor Chadwick. As one alumnus said:

> Professor Chadwick has not lost the zeal he had 26 years ago when he first taught me about geography, ancient history, and archaeology. I remember him being so energized by all the fun facts and details he shared with us. When I returned with him in 2019, those of us now in our 40s were lying on the ground, giving into the hot August sun and worn out by the pace of our trip. Yet, Jeff was unaffected by all of it and as eager to teach us that we and our spouses might have a full experience with the land and peoples and events that are so much a part of him. How is it that this man in his 60s can still run circles around his students? He was born to do this.

> Visiting a tell and learning all about the archaeology of that place might get old to some (and it did to us when we were his students years ago), but to Jeff, the stones and dirt bring twinkle to his eye. His love for what he does has breathed new life into many a tell for countless students.

Another alumnus stated:

> When I landed in Tel Aviv in 1993 as a 19-year-old from Idaho, I had no idea how my life would be changed and how much I would come to love Israel. Professor Chadwick had no small part in that. I still have his amazing study guides and maps and my notes from his classes. Fast

forward 26 years. I wanted my son, who happened to be a student in Professor Chadwick's comparative religion class, to learn from Jeff in Israel as I had done. So we went on the alumni tour, and I was not disappointed. He still has it! I did not think that he could love Israel or know more than he did in 1993, but I was wrong. I have never seen someone love their job and get excited about rocks and tells and all the new findings than Dr. Chadwick. His enthusiasm is amazing and infectious. The wealth of his knowledge is astounding. I will be forever grateful to him for teaching me and my son.

I knew that Jeff Chadwick belonged at BYU. I had seen him in action, both in the classroom and on-site in the land of the scriptures, and I knew of the impact he could have on our students and the academy at large.

Others who had also taught with him in Jerusalem felt the same way. The problem was, however, that we don't teach archaeology classes in our College of Religious Education. We wanted him as a colleague in our college, not across campus in the College of Family, Home, and Social Sciences. We knew what a good religious educator he was. But it would take a few years until just the right spot would open up in our college. By that time, I was no longer just a junior faculty member with little to no influence. I had become associate dean of the college and gladly used some of my influence to encourage my colleagues to consider Jeff for a position as a professor of comparative religions. Since joining our faculty in 2001, Professor Chadwick has taught hundreds of students in his classes on the Hebrew Bible, the New Testament, Judaism, Islam, and survey classes on world religions. The effectiveness and impact of his teaching is seen in these representative comments of students:

> I have had the privilege of taking three classes from Professor Chadwick, and regrettably, I will not have the opportunity to take another one as I am graduating this semester. His insights and experience brought to his courses have been extremely beneficial to me. I am truly grateful for the opportunity I had to listen and learn from Dr. Chadwick. The things I have learned I will carry with me for the rest of my life. Because of the course I have taken from him, I have a much clearer understanding of myself and the world around me and how it all fits into the Creator's Great Plan.

> I absolutely loved this course. I am not the type of student who gets excited about lectures and readings, but with this course, I was always engaged and excited. The course was so organized. The visuals he used in his lectures were clear and informative. The assignments made sense and really facilitated learning. But I have to say that Professor Chadwick was the thing that I enjoyed the most. I love that fact that he addresses each religion in a nonbiased way. He really respects those of other religions and helped us to see all the peoples of the world, regardless of their faith, as truly brothers and sisters.

> Professor Chadwick is the most talented teacher and communicator I have had in my academic career. He sets up the course workload perfectly, and his assignments are the most practical compared to any other course I have taken. He blew my mind away with how much he knew about biblical archeology and ancient history. He always stressed the importance of reading in the Bible in its overall context. I will honestly read the scriptures differently because of taking his class. This man is almost too good for his own good.

Certainly, more could be said about Jeff's effectiveness in the classroom, but the primary purpose of a Festschrift is a published work that pays tribute to a valued colleague with scholarly articles and essays from their academic peers. This Festschrift, by its very nature, bespeaks of the significant stature attained and important contributions made by Dr. Jeff Chadwick in his field. As I mentioned at the outset of this essay, I am not an archaeologist. Nor am I in the same academic league as Jeff. He certainly runs in different scholarly circles than I do, but I do know, nonetheless, that he is highly respected in those circles. His roles as a senior research fellow with the William F. Albright Archaeological Institute in Jerusalem, as a member of the Board of Trustees of the American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR), and his work alongside some of the best and brightest archaeologists in Israel and the United States – such as Phillip Hammond, Sy Gitin, Trude Dothan, and Aren Maeir – testify of that respect.

On a visit to Jerusalem several years ago, Jeff took me to visit some of the archaeological excavations that had been done in the years since I lived in Israel. I was amazed – amazed not just with the remarkable finds but that Jeff was on a first-name basis with the luminaries of archaeology in Israel, including Eli Shukron and Ronny Reich. When Jeff introduced them to me, I must admit that I was a bit star-struck. It was as if I had met Indiana Jones himself.

I am so pleased that Dr. Jeffrey R. Chadwick is being honored with this Festschrift. He is most deserving. Although I have nothing really to contribute to the scholarship presented in this volume, I humbly offer this introductory essay with my deepest respect and appreciation for Jeff as an eminent scholar, gifted teacher, valued colleague, and dear friend.

Biblical Historical Geography

Owen D. Chesnut

Asking for a Place: Identifying the Location of Biblical Eshta'ol

Introduction

The location of biblical Eshta'ol has been greatly disputed over the years. Scholars have agreed on a general location for the city but not on the actual site. At least six sites have been proposed; however, little actual research has been done on Eshta'ol since the first half of the twentieth century. Much of the research done has focused on toponymics because of the lack of archaeological remains. These two methods (toponymics and archaeology), along with geography, will be used in this paper to determine the actual location of Eshta'ol.

The city of Eshta'ol is mentioned seven times in the Old Testament,[1] and in every instance, it is mentioned along with Zorah. The Hebrew place name אֶשְׁתָּאוֹל comes from the root שָׁאַל (*shâ'al*), meaning "to ask, inquire, or borrow." Rainey and Notley understand this word to be a preservation of the infinitive form of the obsolete *Gt* stem in Akkadian as a carryover from the Canaanite language that has lost any definitive meaning in the Hebrew (Rainey and Notley 2006: 16). The form could also be derived from the *Hithpael* stem, which would give it a general reflexive meaning. These grammatical suggestions indicate that the place-name "Eshta'ol" should be defined as "to ask," "entreaty," or "(place of) asking." The third option, if taken as the most accurate definition, indicates that Eshta'ol could have been the location of a Canaanite sanctuary or of an oracle.[2]

Textual References: Geographical and Historical Information

Biblically, Eshta'ol was first mentioned in the city lists of Joshua 15. In verse 33, it is listed with Zorah and Ashnah as one of the first cities mentioned in the "lowland"

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1 Josh 15:33; 19:41; Judg 13:25; 16:31; 18:2, 8, and 11. The term "Eshta'olites" is mentioned once in 1 Chron 2:53, describing descendants of the clan from Kiriath-jearim. The people from Kiriath-jearim were descendants of Hur and were part of the tribe of Judah (1 Chron 4:1). This verse indicates that after the Danites left this part of the country, their tribal territory was given to Judah.
2 See Burney (1912: 83–84) for further discussion of the grammatical origins of the place-name "Eshta'ol."

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or Shephelah grouping (Fig. 1). The next reference is Josh 19:41, where Eshta'ol is listed between Zorah and Ir-shemesh (probably Beth-shemesh) as one of the first cities included in the territory of Dan. Judg 1:34 states, "The Amorites pressed the people of Dan back into the hill country, for they did not allow them to come down to the plain." Thus, it seems as if the Danites, after being allotted a number of cities, were forced to abandon all of their territory except for Eshta'ol and Zorah along with a few camps located around those cities. According to these verses, we know that Eshta'ol was a city located in the Shephelah, situated in close proximity to Zorah and in the general area of Ashnah and Beth-shemesh.

Fig. 1: The districts of the Shephelah.

Judges 13 records the story of Samson's birth to Danite parents in the city of Zorah. Judg 13:25 says, "The Spirit of the Lord began to stir him in Mahaneh-Dan, between Zorah and Eshta'ol." The name "Mahaneh-Dan" can be translated as "the camp of Dan," a definition which seems to indicate that this group of Danites was not permanently settled in this area. Perhaps the phrase is simply a general term for the area where the Danites were located, yet it still denotes impermanence. The end of the Samson saga also mentions Eshta'ol. In Judg 16:31, Samson was buried in the

tomb of his father, Manoah, which was located between Zorah and Eshta'ol. In addition to this reference, Eshta'ol is mentioned three other times in Judges 18, in the account of the Danites leaving their area of the Shephelah and settling in the far northern region of the country. In this account, it seems as if Zorah and Eshta'ol were the two main locations where the Danites dwelled. Judg 18:2 reports that five men from each city were sent to spy out and explore the land. When they returned to the two cities with news of a better land at a place called Laish, 600 men set out from Eshta'ol and Zorah to attack and claim the city of Laish as their own.

From the above passages, it appears as if Eshta'ol and Zorah were the two most important cities for the tribe of Dan during the period of the Judges. It also seems as if Samson was the tribe's one hope to claim its inheritance in the northern Shephelah. Any inroads he may have made during his life, however, were quickly wiped away after his death. This lack of long-term success means that the Danites, living in only two permanent settlements (Eshta'ol and Zorah), were even more pressured by the Philistine presence in the Sorek Valley to find a new place to live.

In his *Onomasticon*, Eusebius mentions two Eshta'ols: one near Ashdod and the other near Zorah. Eusebius considered the Eshta'ol (spelled Ασταωλ in the LXX) near Zorah to be the place "where Samson was stirred" (Notley and Safrai 2005: 86). Eusebius placed this location 10 Roman miles north of Eleutheropolis on the way to Nicopolis (Emmaus).[3] This early-recorded distance, however, is supposedly a faulty measurement and has since been corrected to 14 Roman miles (Thompson 1978: 104). While the distance first proposed by Eusebius is too short to support the proposed location of Eshta'ol, the new calculation of distance is a better match for the proposed location. Eusebius's mention of this site is the earliest reference to Eshta'ol outside of the Bible until the 14th century C.E. when Estori ha-Parhi identified Eshta'ol with the modern village of Ishwa' (Ha-Parhi 1897: 302). He based this identification on the similarity between the modern Arabic name and the Biblical Hebrew name.

19th-Century Sources: Geographical and Toponymic Information

The early explorers came to the land of Israel in the 19th century C.E. trying to identify ancient sites and archaeological ruins, as well as to map the country. Their journals of traveling the land can be very helpful in identifying biblical sites and understanding the land as it was before modern construction. Edward Robinson was the first to travel through the northern Shephelah, and though he discussed Zorah, concerning Eshta'ol

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3 All *Onomasticon* references taken from Notley and Safrai (2005).

he only said: "Of Eshta'ol, which also lay in the vicinity, we could find no trace" (Robinson 1970: 225).

The next explorer who went through the Shephelah was Charles Clermont-Ganneau, who attempted to identify Eshta'ol but had a hard time deciding between 'Eselin (modern Islin) and Eshu (Ishwa').[4] He originally thought that, phonetically, 'Eselin was more similar to Ashnah than it was to Eshta'ol and, thus, attributed Eshu to the biblical city of Eshta'ol.[5] However, based on the biblical evidence, he realized that Ashnah has to be south of not only Zorah but also Beth-shemesh.[6] Clermont-Ganneau admitted that M. Guerin had heard of a legend that the sanctuary of Sheikh Gherib is the tomb of Samson (Guerin 1869: 14), a reality, if true, would identify 'Eselin as the biblical site of Mahaneh-Dan and Eshu (Ishwa') as Eshta'ol. Clermont-Ganneau dismissed this view based on unsubstantial evidence and the fact that the tomb of Samson appears to be identified with several different buildings. This idea brought about by Guerin must hold some credence, nonetheless, because for 'Eselin to be identified with Eshta'ol, there must be an ancient site or ruins of some kind between 'Eselin and Zorah (modern Tel Zor'a or Sar'a), and there is not.

Conrad Schick examined the area of the northern Chalk Moat in 1887, focusing on Artuf but also examining the area around it. He viewed Artuf as the best possible location for Eshta'ol, based on both its name and archaeology.[7] The archaeological evidence found includes several installations that Schick discovered around Artuf. There was a press of some kind, which probably was a wine press.[8] He also found a tomb with an inner chamber cut into bedrock from the Roman or Byzantine period. Schick excavated a small area around a large columbarium and found another press along with three graves (two square and one round) and an ancient wall. These ancient finds, along with the Roman road running near the site, led Schick to identify Artuf with Eshta'ol. But because he was not able to produce solid dates for the remains, it is hard to agree with his conclusions. In fact, the majority of his finds appear to be from the Roman or Byzantine period, but he did not have the knowledge of ceramic dating to confirm his finds.

The Survey of Western Palestine also examined the area being discussed while mapping the country in the late 1800s. They did not even consider 'Eselin as a possibility and, at the same time, determined that the other sites in the area, such as Deir esh-Sheikh (also called Deir es-Sheikh Ibrahim), Artuf, and Deir abu-Kabus, were for the most part Arab sites with little to no ancient remains. They concluded

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4 He also noticed that Artuf was an ancient site, but the name did not fit with any biblical name (Clermont-Ganneau 1971: 203).

5 See Clermont-Ganneau (1971: 215–16) for a detailed account of the toponymics.

6 See Josh 14:1, 15:33, 19:41, and 21:16.

7 The idea of the name "Artuf" coming from the Hebrew is expanded by Malky (1946: 43–47). For more on Schick's examination of the area, see Schick (1887: 131–59).

8 This conclusion was reached based on examining the drawings included with Schick's article.

that Eshua' is "a small village near the foot of a hill, with a well to the west, and olives beneath" (Conder and Kitchener 1883: 25). There seems to be no doubt that the Survey of Western Palestine considered the modern town Eshua' to be biblical Eshta'ol.[9]

After traveling through the Shephelah in 1891, George Adam Smith considered Eshua' to be the site of Eshta'ol, explaining that its location is in close proximity to Zorah and its name is possibly a carryover from the Hebrew word Eshta'ol (Smith 1894: 218). In fact, he wrote that Guerin heard at Beit Atab an old tradition that the name Eshua' was originally Eshu'al or Eshthu'al (Guerin 1869: 13). It is clear that the majority of early explorers placed Eshta'ol at Eshua' for reasons mainly relating to toponymics.

20th-Century Sources: Archaeological and Geographical Data

Throughout the years, several sites have been suggested for Eshta'ol: Artuf (1503.1306), Khirbet Deir abu-Kabus (1511.1325), Khirbet Deir Shubeib (1488.1336), Khirbet esh-Sheikh Ibrahim (1516.1315), Eshua' (or Ishwa'; 1512.1320), and Khirbet Islin (or Eselin; 1500.1326; Fig. 2).[10] In the beginning of the 20th century, after the earlier explorers conducted their research, there was another group of scholars with greater knowledge of archaeology and toponymics who approached the problem of site identification in greater detail than had the early explorers. W. F. Albright (1924: 9) and John Garstang (1931: 334–35) were the first to weigh in on the side of Eshua', though neither of them gave much reason for their identification other than its proximity to Zorah. Garstang did go into more detail, however, writing that the modern village of Eshua' occupies part of the ancient site, which appears to date to the period between the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age I, around 1200 B.C.E. He visited the site in 1928 and identified several pieces of pottery that date to the Early Iron Age I. F. M. Abel also examined this area in the 1930s and found that Artuf has pottery from the Iron Age I, while Deir abu-Kabus has pottery from the LB III and the Iron Age I, as well as a water source (Abel 1938: 321). He made no final statement about which site is the most likely, but he was the first to find pottery dating from the Late Bronze and Iron Age at these sites.

John Malky was one of the last of these early 20th-century scholars to weigh in on the debate over the modern-day location of Eshta'ol. He favored Artuf because he believed that its features were similar to what a Canaanite city would have: it had a raised position; several water sources, including a spring called "Ain Shattaleh"; a

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9 See Conder (1880: 49), where he said there is no doubt as to the locations of Zorah and Eshta'ol.
10 Old Israel Grid map reference number for location of each site.
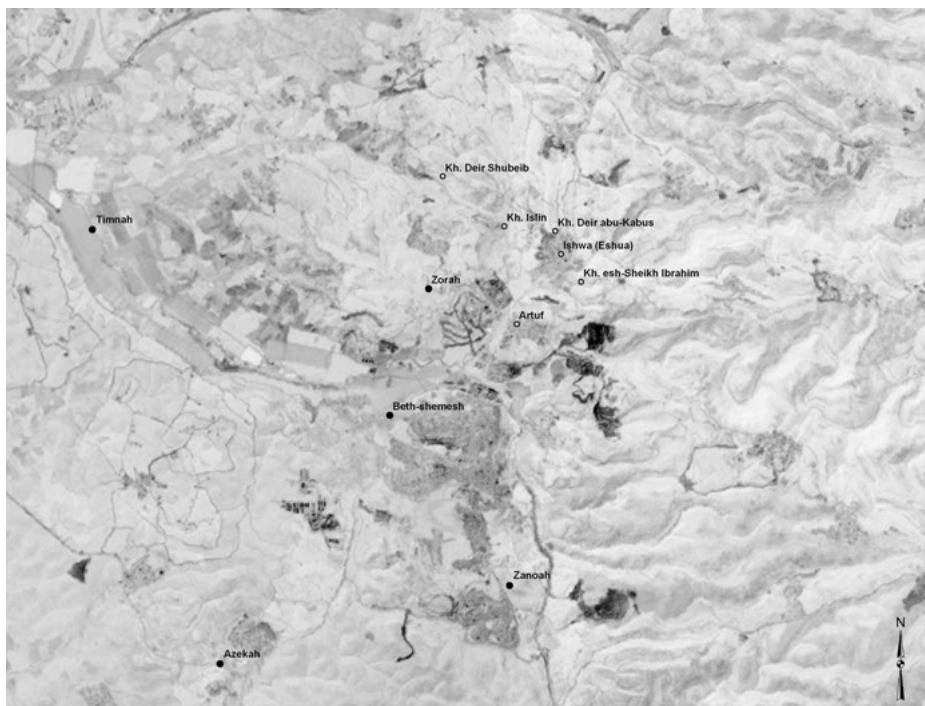
Fig. 2: The possible locations of biblical Eshta'ol.

fortification wall made of large, dressed stones; and a Roman road near to the site (Malky 1946: 44). He also believed that the name "Eshta'ol" could mean "town at the junction of watersources" (Malky 1946: 46), a definition that is highly unlikely based on the previously discussed grammatical constructs. Malky's argument continues to lose weight because of his own uncertainty. He seemed unsure of his previous definition, so he proposed another: the modern name "Artuf" is a variant of the Arabic word *'arafe* meaning "oracle," and is based on the original Hebrew definition of Eshta'ol that means "(place of) asking." This translation also does not stand up to evaluation because it is very difficult linguistically to get "Artuf" from *'arafe*; this linguistic process is infrequent at best.[11]

Today it is up to modern scholars to sort through the many ideas that have been presented by scholars of the past on the location of biblical Eshta'ol. Kallai (1986: 368) and Rainey (2006: 141) favor its identification with Khirbet Deir Shubeib, but both admit that the village name of Ishwa' might preserve a vague remembrance of Eshta'ol, and neither cites any evidence for the identification of Eshta'ol with Deir Shubeib. Kallai, however, does mention that the finds at Deir abu-Kabus and Ishwa'

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11 See footnote 9 in Niemann (1999: 27).

Tab. 1: Survey work for possible locations of Eshta'ol (Lehmann, Niemann, and Zwickel 1996, unless otherwise noted).

Site	Map Reference	Pottery	Architecture	Other
Artuf	1503.1306	Byzantine	stone tomb, oil & wine press, columbarium caves (Schick 1887). 60 m ancient wall (Malky 1946)	Roman road and high hill (Malky 1946)
Kh. Deir Abu Qabus	1511.1325	25 Byzantine sherds, Hellenistic, & Roman (none earlier); LB III & IA I (Abel 1938)	building stones *in situ*, building complex w/many rooms, oil press, and wine press. Cisterns and rock cut tombs (PGE 1944: 1245)	two stone pillars and mosaic tiles
Kh. Deir Shubeib	1488.1336	a lot of Early Bronze, Iron, Persian, Hellenistic, Roman, & Byzantine	Ruined buildings, foundations, cisterns, and caves (PGE 1944: 1248)	50 x 50 m area
Kh. esh-Sheikh Ibrahim	1516.1315	Iron Age, Roman, Byzantine and Islamic	rock cut tombs, cistern, and oil press. Remains of ancient buildings (PGE 1944: 1315)	
		Byzantine, Ummayad	stone installations, mosaic, 3 cisterns, and terrace walls	70 x 70 m area
Iswa (Eshua)	1512.132	Iron IIC (two sherds), Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine. 1 *lmlk*jar handle (Kuschke 1971). Iron Age I sherds (Loewenstamm 1950: 790).	5x20 m foundation wall w/ floor (dressed wall stones), cave w/oil press, and millstones (1.5m)	100 x 300 m oval shaped area

are incompatible with the historical account of Eshta'ol (Kallai 1986: 368). Aharoni (1967: 376) favors Ishwa', Simons (1959: 146) favors Artuf, and Dorsey (1991: 154) is the only one who favors esh-Sheikh Ibrahim. However, none of them gives any evidence for why they favor these sites. Lehmann, Niemann, and Zwickel completed a comprehensive survey of the Zorah and Eshta'ol area in 1996, and their survey showed that Deir Shubeib and esh-Sheikh Ibrahim have Iron Age remains. They also claim to have found one Iron Age IIC sherd at Ishwa'. Their survey also revealed that Artuf, Deir abu-Kabus, and Khirbet Islin have no remains earlier than the Byzantine period.[12] They completely dismiss Deir abu-Kabus, saying that there

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12 Remains at Hartuv (er-Rujm), next to Artuf (Moshav Naham), revealed a one-period site of 3 ha dating to the EB I (3500–3050 B.C.E.; Mazar and Miroschedji 1996: 1–40). No remains dating to later periods were found.

is no toponymic or archaeological evidence. They even go so far as to say that Abel mistook Garstang's ceramic evidence from Ishwa' for that of Deir abu-Kabus (Lehmann, Niemann, and Zwickel 1996: 352). In the same article, they do not focus on Khirbet esh-Sheikh Ibrahim or Deir Shubeib as legitimate possibilities, despite the Iron Age sherds found. This group of German scholars views Ishwa' as the most likely location of Eshta'ol based on archaeological evidence and toponymics. They found an Iron Age IIC sherd at the site, and Kuschke found two Iron Age IIC pieces, one being a _lmlk_ jar handle (Kuschke 1971: 300–1). They also say that the site name "Eshua'" (or "Ishwa'") is related to the personal name *Su'a* (Gen 38:2, 12; 1 Chron 2:3) or *Sua'* (1 Chron 7:32; Niemann 1999: 28). Niemann (1999) admits that this argument is relatively weak, but it is still adequate compared to its lack of linguistical connections with the other sites in the area (see Tab. 1 for Eshta'ol pottery chart).[13]

Personal Survey Work

In an effort to personally determine which of these sites should be identified with Eshta'ol, I visited three of the possible sites in May of 2006. I did not visit Ishwa', Artuf, or Islin because of their current location (they had a town, kibbutz, or moshav built on top of the remains). The goal of visiting these sites was to better understand the area, take detailed notes and pictures of any remains, and to identify pottery types.

Khirbet Deir abu-Kabus (1511.1325)

The first site I visited was Khirbet Deir abu-Kabus (see Fig. 3), located on a hill overlooking Ishwa' (modern Eshta'ol), which is off of Route 38. In fact, the first significant thing about the site was its commanding view of the area. The location has an unobstructed view of Zorah, and the basin between the two sites (the beginning of the Chalk Moat) is completely open (Fig. 4).[14] The Chalk Moat is an area defined geologically and topographically. Geologically, it is made up of soft Senonian chalk, which separates the hard Cenomanian limestone of the Hill Country from the soft Eocene limestone of the Shephelah. Topographically, it is an area that begins just north of the modern town of Ishwa', where the hill, made up of Eocene and Senonian, descends into the Sorek Valley. At this point, the Moat is 2 km wide. As the Moat ends at Keilah, its width steadily decreases from its widest point across from the Elah Valley

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13 For an updated review of surveys in the area see Hofedeitz (2020).

14 This basin can be considered the northern end of the Chalk Moat, with the sites of Zorah and Eshta'ol as posts on either side.

and comes to a point (Chesnut 2006). Surface sherds were observed on the ascent to the south-southwest slope of the hill. Near the summit a very shallow cave was noticed, with two openings. On the southern summit are remains of walls, poorly constructed and made of small, loose fieldstones (Fig. 5). These walls are most likely remains of either a Byzantine or Arab village, though a Byzantine village is the more likely of the two options because none of the typical signs of an Arab village are present (i.e., Sabra cacti, terracing, or olive orchards). The rest of the remains found on the summit continuing north seemed to confirm that these building remains were Byzantine. Next to the walls is a rock-cut installation, perhaps part of a larger press.[15] Two circular cup marks can be observed near this installation: the first is shallow and circular, and the second is deep (45.72 cm) with a square cut made next to it. Continuing across the summit, there was a large cave with an entrance that had been carved from the bedrock. The cave was probably used for burials because no plaster can be seen on the walls; it was largely filled with debris, making further examination difficult.

Fig. 3: View of Khirbet Deir abu-Kabus from Khirbet esh-Sheikh Ibrahim (with modern town of Ishwa'/Eshta'ol between).

Part of a large olive oil press is also located on the summit (Fig. 6), though it is now incorporated into a park area with benches. The press is clearly Roman in nature –

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15 Grass and weeds covered the area, but the area of bedrock where the cup marking was found continued.

Fig. 4: View of the basin separating the hill with Deir abu-Kabus from the hill in the distance where Zorah is located.

Fig. 5: Small fieldstone walls from the Byzantine or Islamic Periods.

a grooved-pier press dating to the second quarter of the first century C.E. (Frankel 1999: 122) – and is associated with a large industrial complex to the north. The grooved-pier press supported a single rotating screw press that is found only in southern Israel (Frankel 1999: 126). This industrial complex consists of a large rock-cut rectangle (18 x 15 m) with small, square and circular cuttings located sporadically around the perimeter of the area. There is evidence of a large olive oil press to the northwest of this raised rectangle, and weight stones were found next to it. A spur of the summit continues around to the northwest, and the slopes descend steeply on either side. Pottery was mainly found on the southern slope and the southern summit (the sides facing the Chalk Moat), and the majority of it dates to the Byzantine period, with a few pieces from the Roman and Islamic periods.

Fig. 6: Byzantine olive oil press on the summit of Deir abu-Kabus.

Khirbet esh-Sheikh Ibrahim (1516.1315)

Khirbet esh-Sheikh Ibrahim was next visited, which is just off and to the north of Route 395, shortly after the turnoff from Route 38. This site has remains of many large buildings and a wall constructed of large, loose fieldstones as well as cut stones of ashlar masonry (1 m^2; Fig. 7). These buildings take up a majority of the northern half of the area where remains are located. Two large olive presses can be seen on the northern and southern sides of these buildings. In the easternmost area of buildings is a cave, which was most likely used for burial; its interior stretches

Fig. 7: Remains of large buildings on the western slopes of Khirbet esh-Sheikh Ibrahim.

Fig. 8: A possible burial cave at Khirbet esh-Sheikh Ibrahim.

back a considerable distance and, at one point, contains evidence that it was once much deeper but has since been filled in (Fig. 8). A worked stone with several holes carved in it, along with an Iron Age sherd, was found in the cave. On the southern side of the buildings is a large, circular, doughnut-shaped cut rock that covers up a large cistern. Little other pottery was observed, but most of what was found dates to the Byzantine and Islamic periods.

Khirbet Deir Shubeib (1488.1336)

Khirbet Deir Shubeib, the third and final Eshta'ol site visited, is located off of Route 44 on the right side of the road as you drive north. It is located in an area with trails for off-road exploration and mountain biking, just past the turnoff for Zorah and before the exit to Taoz. This site was especially hard to find because the area is terribly overgrown with chest-high brush. It was eventually found, but only six sherds and the remains of walls, poorly made with small fieldstones, could be seen.

Conclusions

Based on research and personal exploration, the following conclusions can be made on the site identification of Eshta'ol. Islin, Artuf, and even Deir abu-Kabus can be ruled out as the location of Eshta'ol because of their complete lack of appropriate archaeological evidence from the desired time period and the lack of a toponymical connection. If we are to read the biblical account as a geographical reality, then Mahaneh-Dan must be located between Zorah and Eshta'ol, meaning that Khirbet Deir Shubeib would be the best candidate for Mahaneh-Dan (because it is the only site located between Zorah and the other possible sites for Eshta'ol). Khirbet Dier Shubeib has produced pottery evidence from the Iron Age as well as foundation walls around a site of 50 x 50 m area. However, based on the topography of the area, it might be possible that the term "Mahaneh-Dan" refers to the general area of the basin between Eshta'ol and Zorah rather than a specific site (see Fig. 4 for view of basin). LB III and early Iron Age I settlements in this area were probably not very large; at best, they were small villages with shoddy walls, and at worst, they were untraceable campsites (like the name "Mahaneh-Dan" indicates). Eshta'ol and Zorah act as guardians of the basin, watching the routes through the Chalk Moat and Sorek Valley out to the area of the Philistines. "Mahaneh" does mean "settlement" in Hebrew, and in Judg 18:12, Mahaneh-Dan is mentioned as being a place just west of Kiriath-jearim. Thus, the name refers to the area where the Danites set up camp, making the basin between Zorah and Eshta'ol a perfect location (this situation also makes Khirbet Deir Shubeib a good possibility for one of their campsites).

The above conclusions leave Ishwa' and Khirbet esh-Sheikh Ibrahim as the two best possible sites for Eshta'ol. The toponymic evidence does indicate that Ishwa' is a stronger possibility, but its connection to the Hebrew name "Eshta'ol" is by no means a certainty. Also, Khirbet esh-Sheikh Ibrahim is geographically close enough to Ishwa'; therefore, if the name Ishwa' (Eshua') is related to the biblical name "Eshta'ol," it is conceivable that a transfer may have occurred from Khirbet esh-Sheikh Ibrahim. The archaeological evidence is also a tossup since both sites have Iron Age pottery, although the surface sherds at both sites are limited. A large number of scholars identify Ishwa' with Eshta'ol, while very few consider Khirbet esh-Sheikh Ibrahim. After personally visiting the sites, based on location alone, Ishwa' seems like a much more likely location for Eshta'ol than does Khirbet esh-Sheikh Ibrahim. Ishwa' is in a much more commanding location, slightly raised above the surrounding valley, while Khirbet esh-Sheikh Ibrahim is tucked away below the slopes of the hills to the north and east. Ishwa' has a good, clean line of sight to Zorah (the one city with which it is always mentioned in the Bible) and of the basin forming the beginning of the Chalk Moat, while Zorah is hard to see from esh-Sheikh Ibrahim and the basin cannot be seen at all. Each of these factors solidifies Ishwa' as the best option to be identified as biblical Eshta'ol.

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"And There Was Peace between Israel and the Amorites" (1 Sam 7:14): A Biblical and Archaeological View on Israelites and Canaanites in the Shephelah in Late Iron Age I

The opening verses of 1 Samuel 7 describe a situation in which the Philistines had dominated Israel "for a long time, twenty years," since their great victory at Ebenezer, as described in 1 Samuel 4. In 1 Samuel 7, the Israelites abandoned the foreign gods that they had been worshipping and accepted Samuel's leadership. Samuel, on his part, assembled the Israelites at Mizpah, sacrificed and prayed to God, led the attack, and was granted a major victory over the Philistines. According to verses 13 and 14, "So the Philistines were subdued and did not again enter the territory of Israel; the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. The towns that the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath; and Israel recovered their territory from the hand of the Philistines." The three verses that follow then go on to describe Samuel's leadership of Israel: "Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. He went on a circuit year by year to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah; and he judged Israel in all these places. Then he would come back to Ramah, for his home was there; there he judged Israel, and there he built an altar to the Lord." Between these two sections, after telling the reader that Israel had recovered their towns and territories "from Ekron to Gath," verse 14 suddenly interjects: "And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites."

This phrase immediately brings three questions to mind:
1. What Amorites?
2. What sort of "peace"?
3. What does peace with the Amorites have to do with Samuel's war against the Philistines?

Only then, after these questions are answered, we can begin to think about the next question: Is this statement purely part of the literary structure of the book of Samuel, or does it also reflect a historical reality, and if so, what reality does it reflect?

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What Amorites, and What Sort of Peace?

Let us begin with "the Amorites." This paper is not the place for a full-fledged analysis of the use of the term "Amorites" in the Bible, and it is certainly not the place for a discussion of the problematic relationship between the biblical term "Amorite" and the term "Amurru" as known in many Ancient Near Eastern contexts (about which see Fleming 2016; Homsher and Cradic 2017a; 2017b; and most recently Burke 2021). However, it is quite clear that within the Bible, the Amorites (האמרי) were one of several Canaanite subgroups and, as such, appear in almost all of the various lists of the Canaanite "nations" (such as Gen 10:15–18, 15:19–21; Deut 7:1; Josh 3:10; and many more). Some passages, such as Num 13:21, supposedly give us more specific information: "The Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negeb; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the hill country; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the Jordan." Josh 11:3 states: "To the Canaanites in the east and the west, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, and the Jebusites in the hill country, and the Hivites under Hermon in the land of Mizpah." On the other hand, in quite a few places in the Bible, the term "Amorite" was often used as a synonym for "Canaanite" in general, both for the people and for the land. For example, when, in Gen 15:16, God told Abraham that his descendants will spend four generations in a foreign land "for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete," he was obviously referring to all of the inhabitants of Canaan. In general, we can summarize that within biblical tradition, the Amorites seem to be the most wide-spread of the Canaanite peoples, sort of "default Canaanites." In other words, any Canaanite who was not specifically a Girgashite, a Jebusite, a Hivvite, a Hittite, a Perizite or a Kadmonite may be referred to as an Amorite.[1] Needless to say, modern scholarship has no idea what cultural or other differences there may have been between the Amorites and other Canaanites, nor has archaeology managed to distinguish between the material culture of an Amorite and that of a Girgashite.

So who does "Amorites" refer to in 1 Sam 7:14? Do the Amorites with whom Israel were at peace represent the entire "Canaanite" population of the land, or do they represent a specific group of Amorites? The answer to this question, of course, depends on one's perspective. For just a sampling, Robert P. Gordon wrote (1988: 108): "The *Amorites* here represent the pre-Israelite inhabitants of Canaan." Ralph W. Klein (1983: 69) stated: "The latter word was used quite frequently in Dtr, especially in Joshua and Judges, to denote the inhabitants of Palestine before Israel's arrival." P. Kyle McCarter (1980: 147) wrote that the "biblical narrative influenced by Deuteronomy or by the so-called Elohistic portions of the Tetrateuch uses this

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1 This is sort of analogous to the way "Russian" was used in the West as a general term for the population of the old Soviet Union, which was often simply referred to as "Russia," even though the actual Russians were just one of many ethnic groups living there.

term as an ethnic designation for the entire pre-Israelite population of Palestine and Transjordan. The exceedingly complicated background of the designation has no importance here." Tony W. Cartledge (2001: 103) also concurred, stating: "'Amorites' is the Deuteronomists' preferred ethnic term for the indigenous populations of Palestine, many of whom remained after the Israelite 'conquest.'" More recently, David Tsumura (2007: 240) wrote: "The Amorites were the pre-Israelite population of ancient Canaan . . . the term is used here in the widest sense, referring to the totality of indigenous inhabitants."

The way these scholars viewed the identity of these Amorites also influenced their view on the idea of "peace" between the Amorites and Israel. Coming as it does as part of the description of Samuel's victory and more importantly his leadership – right before that leadership was challenged by the people's request for a king – the statement is usually assumed to be part of the Deuteronomists' idealized picture of Samuel. Once again, McCarter (1980: 147) stated: "The writer's point is simply that during Samuel's career the Israelites were at peace with those who remained of the indigenous population as well as with the Philistines, who, like the Israelites, were regarded as latecomers. In other words, Israel was safe from internal as well as external threat." Tsumura (2007: 240) indicated: "The Israelites subdued the Philistines while having a peaceful relationship with the Amorites. In other words, Israel was safe both internally and externally" (note that McCarter assumed that Israel was also at peace with the Philistines, while Tsumura assumed that they had "subdued" them). Others who were a bit more critical used such terminology as "the alleged peace with the Amorites," about which Klein (1983: 69) wrote: "It seems likely that these verses report Dtr's theological interpretation of Samuel's victory rather than its actual historical accomplishments." Hertzberg (1964: 69) went even further by stating that "the note that relations with the original inhabitants were good does not imply that this was the consequence of a victory. It is intended rather to give a further indication of the influence of the powerful personality of Samuel, who was everywhere respected." In other words, peace between Israel and the Amorites, who actually represented all Canaanites everywhere, was simply a part of the idealized picture of Samuel's judgeship painted by the Deuteronomistic historian, meant to accentuate the irony of the people's request for a king.

However we understand the situation described in our story, we should keep in mind that according to Deut 20:10–11, "peace" between Israel and its neighbors means "all the people there shall serve you as forced labor." Tigay (1996: 188) adopted this interpretation of "peace" in Deut 20:10 and cited ANE parallels for the use of this term: "Offer it *shalom*, here meaning terms of surrender, a promise to spare the city and its inhabitants if they agree to serve you ." In 1 Kgs 5:1–4 (Eng. 4: 21–24), we are told that "Solomon was sovereign over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines, even to the border of Egypt; they brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life . . . . For he had dominion over all the region west of the Euphrates from Tiphsah to Gaza, over all the kings west of the

Euphrates; and he had peace on all sides." So there, too, "peace" between Israel and their neighbors was understood as Israel's domination and subjugation of them. We should keep this interpretation in mind to understand our passage as well.

"From Ekron to Gath"

What all of these interpretations are lacking is focus – especially geographical focus. While "Amorite" may well be a default term for "Canaanite" in many biblical passages, in 1 Sam 7:14, the geographical context was very clear: "The towns that the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath; and Israel recovered their territory from the hand of the Philistines."

Interestingly, the commentators' understanding of this verse has also changed over time. According to Rabbi David Qimḥi, or Radaq, who was a Bible scholar, grammarian, and philosopher in Provence in the late 12th and early 13th centuries: "*And the cities returned* – for the tribe of Judah had captured these cities in the beginning, as it says in the beginning of the book of Judges, and then the Philistines returned and took them from them, and now in the days of Samuel these cities returned to Israel" (Cohen 2013: 37, translation my own). Indeed, Judg 1:18 does claim that Judah conquered "Gaza and its territory, Ashkelon and its territory and Ekron and its territory,"[2] and Ekron, Ashdod, and Gaza are also listed, albeit as a separate "unit," in the territory of Judah in Josh 15:45–46 (for which see Aharoni 1979: 348; Tappy 2008). Consequently, Keel (1981: 66) explained that "these two cities were part of the inheritance of Judah . . . and were captured by Judah at the beginning of the time of the Judges but they could not inherit them because of their iron chariots (Judges 1:19)." And McCarter (1980: 147) noted: "*From Ekron to Gath* . . . . Both were disputed border cities. The writer's point is that all such cities were controlled by Israel during Samuel's lifetime, and that the Philistines were confined to a minimal home base."

Unlike the situation that existed even as recently as the 1980s, there is now no doubt as to the identification of Ekron at Khirbet Muqanaʿ/Tel Miqne and of Gath at Tell eṣ-Ṣâfi/Tel Tsafit. Both sites are located in the western, or lower, Shephelah, controlling the Sorek and Elah valleys going from east to west as well as one of the main local routes going from north to south. Archaeological evidence agrees with the biblical text that both cities were part of the "core" area of Philistine settlement beginning in the 12th century B.C.E. and continuing into the Iron Age II (see for example Shavit 2008). It is also clear that neither they or any of the other main Philistine cities were under any sort of Israelite/Judahite "control" during any part of the

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2 Although the Greek version of Judges 1:18 actually says that Judah did not conquer them.

Iron Age I.[3] This was already understood by Gordon: "*From Ekron to Gath* delimits a stretch of border territory which was freed from Philistine control during this period" (Gordon 1988: 108). Tsumura expanded on this idea:

> The phrase *both Ekron and Gath* (lit., "from Ekron to Gath") could mean (1) up to the border between Ekron and Gath; (2) the area between Ekron and Gath – from Mizpah,[4] Ekron comes first, then Gath – the geographical situation suggests "from Ekron as far as Gath" (*ištu . . . adi . . .* "from . . . to . . ."); or (3) both Ekron and Gath; see on 6:18. The third interpretation probably fits the context best; the sense is that the places returned both from Ekron and Gath; namely, "their vicinities" were recovered to Israel . . . it describes the part of the border area that was freed from Philistine control. (Tsumura 2007: 239)

Because of their position in the Shephelah, Gath and Ekron were the nearest of the main Philistine cities to areas of Israelite settlement, and Gath, not surprisingly, was the most frequently mentioned of those cities within the Bible.[5] Biblical tradition also emphasizes the position of both cities on the boundary between Israel and Philistia, as can be seen in two examples in 1 Samuel: the return of the ark from Gath to Ekron and from Ekron to Beth-shemesh in chapter 6 and the flight of the Philistines from the Elah valley to Gath and Ekron in chapter 17. Ekron's status as a frontier town was also reflected in the description of "the land that remains" in Josh 13:3, the boundary description of Judah in Josh 15:11, the mention of "Ekron with its dependencies and villages" in the Judahite town list in Josh 15:45–46, and the counting of Timnah and Ekron within the territory of Dan in Josh 19:43, even if we accept the proposed emendation to "Timnath-Ekron" (as suggested by Aharoni 1979: 312, con. Demsky 2004: 280). The status of that same area of Timnah (Tel Batash, on the Sorek between Ekron and Beth-shemesh) as a frontier zone was also reflected in the Samson narrative (Judges 14), although Ekron itself was not mentioned there (Kelm 1985; Bunimovitz and Lederman 2006).

Within biblical narrative, one of the consequences of this frontier status was the inability of the tribe of Dan to settle in the full extent of their allotment. We first hear of this in Josh 19:47 and again in Judg 18:1. Neither of these references, however, actually tell us why the Danites could not settle their territory. Many commentators have assumed that this was because of conflicts with the Philistines (for example Soggin 1972: 195; Boling 1982: 467; Matthews 2004: 174). Others have pointed to the Amorites as the main culprits (Moore 1895: 387; Gray 1967: 170; Nelson 1997: 266). Butler (2009: 391) asked, "Were they defeated by the Amorites (Judg 1:34–35), or was their major problem with the Philistines, as in the Samson narratives?" Webb (2012: 430–31)

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3 For fairly recent summaries on Ekron and Gath, see Mazow (2016); Maeir (2017) and references therein.

4 From which Samuel attacked the Philistines according to 1 Sam 7:11.

5 Ashdod = 23; Ashkelon = 13; Ekron = 21; Gaza = 22; Gath = 42. On the way Gath was depicted in biblical narrative and its relationship to the archaeological remains, see Levin (2012a); Pioske (2018).

wrote of "pressure from the local Canaanite population and later the Philistines." The answer, however, is spelled out in Judg 1:34: "The Amorites pressed the sons of Dan back into the hill country; they did not allow them to come down to the plain." It was not the Philistines; rather, it was the Amorites.[6]

This mention of Amorites is much more geographically specific and seems to have escaped the attention of most modern commentators. It did not, however, escape the attention of David Qimḥi: "[Peace] *between Israel and the Amorites* – I do not know the reason for this story in this place, for we have not seen that there was war at that time between Israel and the Amorites, but rather with the Philistines. And perhaps while the Philistines were fighting Israel, the rest of the Amorites that had remained in the land with the sons of Dan also fought them, as it says in Judges 'and the Amorites pressed the sons of Dan' (Judges 1:34) . . . and they fought them, and when they saw that the Philistines surrendered they also made peace with Israel" (Cohen 2013: 37, translation my own). So Qimḥi, who did not have any first-hand knowledge of the geography of the land, did try to "connect the dots" between the different mentions of the Amorites in this context. In this, Qimḥi was followed by some more modern commentators, who were familiar with the geography involved. For example, Keel (1981: 66) stated:

> These are the remnants of the Amorites who survived in Israel after the wars of Joshua and Deborah. And later they are called "the rest/remnant of the Amorites" (2 Sam 21:2) and "all the people left from the Amorites" (1 Kings 9:20–21), and we have seen that at the beginning of the days of the Judges the Amorites pressured the sons of Dan and took the main part of their inheritance on the sea coast and settled in their place (Judges 1:34–35). And it is possible that the Amorite was also given at that time to Philistine rule and after Samuel's victory over the Philistines they made peace with Israel (and see Radaq).

Shmuel Abramsky took this idea a little further: "This means naught but that the Amorites had been subjugated by the Philistines and joined hands with Israel against them. It is also possible that they were liberated from the Philistines' yoke because of the Israelites' partial victories and dwelt among them in peace. This must refer to the Amorites who lived in the vicinity of Philistia, who, before the arrival of the Philistines, had 'pressured' the sons of Dan (Judg 1:34–36). Now there was no conflict between them and Israel" (Abramsky and Garsiel 1993: 84).

In other words, unlike the commentators cited above, who assumed that "Amorite" here referred to all Canaanites everywhere, these commentators assumed that the specific Amorites with whom Israel was at peace were the same specific Amorites who had been living on the frontier between the Israelites and the Philistines –

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6 While the Greek version of Josh 19:47 actually does mention the Amorites, most scholars believe this to be a secondary reconstruction based on Judges 1:34 (on which see Nelson 1997: 225–226; Rösel 2011: 321; con. Boling 1982: 462–63, who incorporates it into his translation, rendering "Amorites" as "Westerners").